SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

LANSING, MICHIGAN

For Immediate Release Sen. Martha G. Scott Sen. Hansen Clarke June 20, 2005 517/373-7748 517/373-7346

DEMS SAY BUDGET CUTS UNFAIR TO SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

Detroit Area Facing Nearly \$50 Million in Reductions

LANSING- Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee drew public attention today to the potential impact of nearly \$50 million in budget reductions for the Wayne County area. The Senate Democrats were joined in their opposition to the GOP proposed cuts by representatives of Wayne State University, Wayne County Community Mental Health, Detroit Public Schools and the Detroit Public Library.

"Michigan can no longer afford to wage war on itself," said Sen. Scott. "Lansing Republicans must recognize that the future of our state is forever tied to the future of our state's largest urban center. If one fails, they both fail."

The GOP-dominated legislature has targeted Southeast Michigan to feel the brunt of the pain from the state's ongoing structural deficit problems. Their budget proposals would cut \$20 million from the Wayne County Community Mental Health Board, \$10 million from Wayne State University, \$15 million from Detroit Public Schools, and another \$300,000 from the Detroit Public Library. The cuts are reductions from Governor Granholm's FY 2005-06 budget recommendation.

Lansing Republicans are also cutting the social safety net that many of Wayne County's poor and mentally ill count on to survive. An omnibus budget bill passed by the Michigan House eliminates health insurance for over 40,000 citizens and creates burdensome new premiums and copays for Medicaid recipients. The GOP has been criticized for balancing the budget on the backs of the poor and refusing to close corporate tax loopholes and cut special interests.

"At the same time Lansing Republicans are undermining the cultural institutions that make Detroit a community, they are also unraveling the social safety net that makes us a family," said Sen. Clarke. "We need to adopt a budget that takes care of people rather than special interests."

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